IJEE
Indonesian Journal of English Education

THE USE OF BUSUU APPLICATION TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

Ella Faustina Sari[1*], Aprilia Riyana Putri[2]
[1,2]Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia
(221320000683@unisnu.ac.id)

: November 2025 ; Revised: November 2025; Accepted: December 2025

ABSTRACT

Reading comprehension is still a big challenge for many EFL learners. They often find it hard to identify main ideas, understand vocabulary, and use reading strategies effectively. While earlier studies examined Busuu's role in vocabulary and speaking, little attention has been given to its potential in improving reading comprehension. This study investigates the effect of Busuu on eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Welahan Jepara. A quasi-experimental design was employed to compare two student groups: one taught conventionally and the other using Busuu. Data were collected through reading comprehension tests and analyzed using descriptive statistics, normality and homogeneity checks, paired-samples t-tests, ANCOVA, and normalized gain (N-gain). Results showed that the experimental group achieved higher post-test scores (M = 87.06) compared to the control group (M = 82.4), with ANCOVA confirming a significant treatment effect (F = 6.40, p = 0.014). These findings indicate that Busuu can serve as an effective mobile-assisted learning tool to strengthen reading comprehension in EFL contexts. In addition to statistical improvement, the study shows that Busuu's interactive tasks provide practical guidance for teachers and students in integrating digital resources into classroom instruction.

Keywords: Busuu; EFL students; experimental study; mobile learning; reading comprehension

ABSTRAK

Pemahaman membaca masih menjadi tantangan besar bagi banyak pembelajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing. Mereka sering kesulitan menemukan ide pokok, memahami kosakata, dan menggunakan strategi membaca secara efektif. Penelitian sebelumnya lebih banyak menyoroti peran Busuu dalam kosakata dan keterampilan berbicara. Kontribusinya terhadap pemahaman membaca belum banyak diteliti. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengetahui pengaruh Busuu terhadap pemahaman membaca siswa kelas VIII SMP Negeri 1 Welahan Jepara. Desain kuasi-eksperimen digunakan dengan dua kelas: satu diajar secara konvensional dan satu menggunakan Busuu. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes pemahaman membaca dan dianalisis dengan statistik deskriptif, uji normalitas dan homogenitas, uji-t sampel berpasangan, ANCOVA, serta perhitungan N-gain. Hasil menunjukkan kelompok eksperimen memperoleh skor post-test lebih tinggi (M = 87,06) dibandingkan kelompok kontrol (M = 82,4). ANCOVA mengonfirmasi efek perlakuan yang signifikan (F = 6,40, p = 0,014). Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa Busuu dapat menjadi alat pembelajaran berbasis seluler yang efektif untuk meningkatkan pemahaman membaca. Selain itu, penggunaan Busuu memberi dukungan praktis bagi guru dalam mengintegrasikan sumber digital ke kelas.

Kata Kunci: *Busuu; pembelajar EFL; studi eksperimen; pembelajaran mobile; pemahaman membaca*

How to Cite:
Sari, E. F., & Putri, A. R. (2025). The Use of Busuu Application to Enhance Students' Reading Comprehension: A Quasi-Experimental Study. *IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12*(2), 199–210. https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

*Corresponding author

IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

INTRODUCTION

Reading proficiency continues to be a serious issue among Indonesian students. The OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 cycle reported that Indonesia ranked 71st out of 76 participating countries in reading literacy, highlighting a persistent gap in students' ability to comprehend written texts (Nasrullah et al., 2024). According to Monika et al., (2025) Indonesia has been reported to have an alarmingly low reading interest rate, with UNESCO data indicating that only about 0.1% of Indonesians are active readers. The Indonesian Reading Interest Rate Survey (2020–2023) further shows fluctuations across provinces, including a nationwide decline in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by a recovery in 2022 and 2023. These findings emphasize the urgent need to strengthen reading culture and literacy programs in Indonesia. Taken together, these international and national reports demonstrate that Indonesian students face persistent reading difficulties, particularly at the secondary level, requiring urgent intervention.

Reading comprehension is a complex process that requires strategies beyond word recognition, such as inference and synthesis, which are essential for constructing meaning in academic contexts (Kim, 2021; Katemba, 2025; K. Hassan & Eltayb, 2021; Abeeleh et al., 2021). These skills are particularly vital in English language teaching, where comprehension directly influences learning outcomes and enables students to interact meaningfully with texts (Fergina & Oktavianda, 2024; Zahran, 2025; Njiiri, 2022). Effective comprehension also demands linking textual content with prior knowledge to promote analytical reasoning and enriched interpretation (Zahran, 2025; Hendratno et al., 2025; Indrayani & Hidayati, 2023; Catts 2021). Nevertheless, despite this importance, many students struggle to practice reading independently due to limited access to suitable self-study materials that match their proficiency levels. Consequently, the shortage of interactive, context-rich resources outside the classroom restricts opportunities to reinforce comprehension strategies and develop autonomy. To address these challenges, this study investigates the use of Busuu to enhance reading comprehension among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Welahan Jepara. By situating Busuu within the Indonesian secondary education context, the research contributes novelty by examining how interactive mobile tasks can directly support reading comprehension processes, an area insufficiently addressed in prior CALL/MALL literature.

Several theoretical models have been proposed to explain reading comprehension. In this context, CALL and MALL approaches have been increasingly adopted as potential solutions to address persistent reading difficulties in Indonesia. CALL and MALL have become essential components of language education, commonly adopted in learning environments (Levy, 1997; Hashemifardnia at al., 2021; Yang, 2018; Stockwell, 2022). CALL allows the use of computer software and technology in language learning, providing access to more interactive and adaptive materials. Meanwhile, MALL optimizes mobile devices for more flexible language learning, allowing students to learn anytime and anywhere through apps such as Busuu (AlDakhil & AlFadda, 2021; Citrayasa, 2019; Syafrizal & Septiawati, 2022). Studies show that CALL and MALL-based applications improve students' reading skills, vocabulary, and learning motivation, because the material presented is contextual and interactive (Dwi Agustina & Laili Fatmawati, 2024; Firdaus, 2023). Similarly, Anderson's research on 'Interestingness of Children's Reading Material' shows that children's reading interest can be increased by using reading materials that are interesting and relevant to their lives, thereby improving reading ability and understanding texts (Anderson et al., 2021).

Majumdar et al. (2020) found that utilizing multimodal inputs, such as images and text, can improve reading and understanding of text. In addition, Busuu itself has been shown to support communication-based learning, helping students understand the language through interaction with native speakers as well as structured independent practice (Mulyadi & Maesaroh, 2021; Sholikha,

*Corresponding author
IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

2024). As technology becomes more prevalent in language education, CALL and MALL-based approaches are gaining importance in enhancing literacy and reading skills (Hendratno et al., 2025; Nufus et al., 2023; Zainurrahman et al., 2024).

Reading comprehension in English continues to be a substantial obstacle for numerous students in Indonesia, primarily because students in Indonesia have limited interaction with English, and it rarely appears in students' everyday communication, making it a challenging subject to master. Although various schools have implemented reading strategies to strengthen students' skills and address comprehension difficulties, research indicates that learners continue to struggle with key aspects of understanding texts. They frequently encounter obstacles in recognizing central ideas, finding key details, drawing conclusions, and understanding word meanings. (Diana et al., 2020; Ghulam et al., 2023; Kamola Komilovna, 2023). Various studies have emphasized the persistent gap between students' theoretical understanding and their ability to apply reading strategies effectively in practice. Cultural and linguistic differences, coupled with limited access to authentic English materials, may further contribute to this disconnect. As a result, addressing these challenges is crucial for enhancing students' reading performance and advancing their academic progress in English language learning.

Consistent with these national findings, classroom observations and teacher interviews at SMP Negeri 1 Welahan Jepara revealed that students struggle with reading comprehension, particularly in recognizing main ideas, mastering vocabulary, and applying reading techniques effectively. These issues highlight the urgent need for targeted instructional approaches. Therefore, teachers must implement appropriate strategies to teach reading more effectively.

To address these issues, Busuu is increasingly used as a tool to help improve reading comprehension (AlDakhil & AlFadda, 2021); (Rahmawati & Hidayat, 2024). Syafrizal and Septiawati (2022) highlight a similar conclusion, noting that Busuu has the potential to enhance students' reading skills through its communicative and interactive design. This makes Busuu a versatile and user-friendly platform for language learning. Its implementation of interactive multimedia tools and task-based activities provides a dynamic environment that encourages both comprehension and critical engagement with texts.

The use of the Busuu application begins with a simple registration process, allowing users to create an account using an active email or a linked Google account. After logging in, learners select the target language and determine their starting proficiency level, which helps personalize the learning experience. Busuu then provides a structured sequence of lessons that include reading exercises, vocabulary development, and grammar practice. Throughout the learning process, students engage with a variety of interactive tasks such as true/false statements, fill-in-the-blank tasks, synonym pairing tasks, and answering multiple-choice questions about reading passages. These exercises aim to improve students' ability to understand texts holistically, identify explicit and implicit information, and expand their academic vocabulary. For instance, gap-filling tasks help learners grasp sentence context and grammatical structure, while true/false questions train them to filter essential information from the text. Matching synonyms enhances lexical awareness, and comprehension questions encourage deeper engagement with content. To understand how Busuu helps students improve their reading step by step, the following table shows the learning stages inside the app.

Several researchers have explored how the Busuu application contributes to students' language skills, with a particular focus on reading comprehension. Pardede et al. (2024) found that Busuu enhances vocabulary acquisition among seventh-grade students at SMPN 30 Batam through an experimental research design. Citrayasa (2019) highlighted that the app improves pronunciation abilities in seventh-grade students through qualitative methods involving direct interviews and phenomenological analysis.

*Corresponding author

IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

Putri and Degeng (2024) Investigated how MALL tools such as Busuu can help lower speaking anxiety in EFL learners, applying a case study approach that combined qualitative and quantitative methods. The study found that MALL applications significantly reduced speaking anxiety among twelfth-grade students. Similarly, Agustina and Fatmawati (2024) focused on self-directed learning using MALL for speaking practice at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. Their research revealed a structured learning process that enhanced speaking skills.

Other researchers, including Sridhivya et al. (2024) and Ilmi et al. (2023), have investigated how Busuu and similar digital platforms contribute to language skill development. Sridhivya et al. (2024) observed that final-year students using Busuu and ELSA Speak showed progress across four key language areas: auditory comprehension, oral communication, text interpretation, and written expression. Likewise, Ilmi et al., (2023) found that secondary school students in Cirebon experienced improvements in their English listening abilities after engaging with Busuu.

Additional research, such as that conducted by Sholikha (2024), has focused on Busuu's role in improving the lexical knowledge of early adolescents among seventh-grade students. In a quasi-experimental study, Sholikha (2024) compared Busuu users with students taught using standard approaches. The results showed that learners using Busuu achieved significantly better vocabulary outcomes, reinforcing the app's effectiveness as a language learning resource. The study also emphasized several beneficial features of Busuu, including interactive tasks, access to native speaker input, and daily learning reminders.

An application called Busuu application allows students to communicate in English, effectively enhancing their speaking abilities (Firdaus, 2023). Using the Busuu application will make speaking activities more attractive. Busuu is a language-learning application designed to support independent learning through various interactive features that enhance users' reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills (Mulyadi & Maesaroh, 2021; Syafrizal & Septiawati, 2022). One of its key advantages is accessibility, enabling users to learn at any time and from any location using smartphones or computers (AlDakhil & AlFadda, 2021). The application provides interactive materials, including text-based exercises, quizzes, and videos, which help learners progressively build their language proficiency (Citrayasa, 2019; Sholikha & Malik, 2024). Additionally, Busuu features communication with native speakers, enabling users to practice speaking and writing with real-time feedback from a global language-learning community, making the experience more immersive and authentic (Dhivya et al., 2024; Putri & Degeng, 2024).

Based on the Busuu application, this study focuses on improving students' reading comprehension skills using Busuu. Although it has potential benefit in EFL learners, specific research on using Busuu to improve reading skills comprehension may still be limited. This study holds significance due to the limited availability of instructional resources that facilitate autonomous learning. Additionally, the researchers want to determine the distinction in reading comprehension skills between learners instructed with and without the utilization of Busuu. This study will show how Busuu can be used effectively in teaching. The novelty of this research is the use of Busuu to improve students' reading comprehension skills, which has not been explored in previous studies. Also, this study involves eighth-grade students at SMP N 1 Welahan to see the application's impact in a real classroom setting. Preliminary observations and interviews with teachers revealed that students face persistent challenges in reading comprehension, including difficulty identifying main ideas, limited vocabulary, and ineffective use of reading strategies. These issues hinder their ability to engage meaningfully with English texts. Therefore, this investigation focuses on assessing the impact of Busuu on the reading comprehension skills of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Welahan Jepara during the 2025/2026 school year.

*Corresponding author
IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

The process and results of this research are hoped to be beneficial and important. Theoretically, the results contribute to the development of educational theory by demonstrating effective teaching methods and providing teachers with a practical guide for classroom strategies. This study also contributes empirical evidence that can inform future research, enhance educational quality through tested approaches, and stimulate innovative learning practices. Practically, it offers inspiration and motivation for teachers to use the Busuu app in teaching reading, enhancing instructional effectiveness. For students, it provides insights and strategies for effective reading, aiming to motivate those outside the sample to improve their reading skills for both academic and non-academic purposes. Pedagogically, this research can serve as a reference for further studies in improving students' reading skills and other abilities.

METHODS

Research design

To ensure robust control over internal validity factors, this study adopted a quantitative approach (Tuckman, 2000). A quasi-experimental framework was utilized to investigate the impact of Busuu on students' reading comprehension performance. Two key variables were the focus of the study. The independent variable (X) involved Busuu implementation in the experimental group, whereas the control group followed conventional textbook-based teaching. The dependent variable (Y) was students' reading comprehension, which was expected to be affected by the instructional approach applied.

Research site and participants

The participants of this research were learners from grade eight at SMP Negeri 1 Welahan Jepara, involving two selected classes as study samples. Class VIII-G, consisting of 32 students, served as the experimental group, while Class VIII-E, with 31 students, acted as the control group. Both groups received identical reading materials; however, they were taught using different instructional strategies and media during the treatment phase.

To measure the effect of the instructional approach, a pre-test and post-test control group design was applied. The structure of the design is illustrated in the following table:

Table 1. Pre-Test Post-Test Control Group Design

Group	Initial Assessment	Treatment	Final Assessment
Experimental Group	*01*	X	*03*
Control group	*02*	-	*04*

Data collection and analysis

To measure these effects, a reliable instrument was developed. The instrument utilized in this research was a test, specifically an objective multiple-choice format comprising four options—one correct answer and three distractors. Reading comprehension was measured through a pre-test administered before the treatment and a post-test conducted after the treatment, both of which used identical criteria. To ensure validity, each item was carefully aligned with curriculum indicators and theoretical constructs of reading comprehension. Construct validity was further strengthened through review by two experts in reading, whose feedback confirmed that the instrument appropriately reflected key aspects of reading ability. Reliability was then assessed using Jamovi software through a correlation matrix and internal consistency analysis, yielding Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha = 0.828$) and McDonald's ω ($\omega = 0.835$). Both values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.8, indicating that the instrument is consistent and dependable.

*Corresponding author

IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

In this research, researchers selected two classes for the study. Class VIII-G, consisting of 32 students, was assigned as the trial group, while Class VIII-E, with 31 students, served as the control group. Both groups received the same reading materials, but different instructional methods and media were applied during the treatment phase. For the treatment, the test group students were directed to download the Busuu app on their mobile devices and begin studying the 16 sub-chapters available within the app. Meanwhile, the control group received conventional instruction using textbook-based materials, as typically delivered by the teacher. The treatment was conducted over three sessions, during which both groups engaged with the same reading content but through different instructional methods. After the intervention, both groups took a post-test using printed materials, consisting of reading passages and comprehension questions similar to those in the pre-test. The researchers then analyzed the post-test results to evaluate improvements in reading comprehension and to juxtapose the instructional impact between the treatment and comparison groups.

Data were analyzed in Jamovi (v2.3.28) with $\alpha = 0.05$. Analysis steps were:

1. Descriptive statistics (N, mean, SD) for pre-- and post-test scores by group.
2. Assumption checks: normality (Shapiro–Wilk and Kolmogorov–Smirnov) and homogeneity of variances (Levene's and Bartlett's tests).
3. Within-group change: paired-samples t-test for the experimental group to assess pre–post improvement.
4. Between-group comparisons: (a) independent-samples t-test on raw post-test scores as an unadjusted comparison, and (b) ANCOVA on post-test scores with pre-test as covariate to control baseline differences and estimate the adjusted treatment effect.
5. Effect sizes: Cohen's d for t-tests and partial η^2 (and ω^2 where available) for ANCOVA.
6. Learning gain: normalized gain (N-gain) computed per student and summarized (mean, SD, range) by group.
7. If assumptions were violated materially, robust or nonparametric alternatives would be reported (e.g., Mann–Whitney U or bootstrapped confidence intervals); however, parametric results were used given acceptable assumption diagnostics and sample sizes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The preliminary assessment was given on October 23, 2025, at 09:45 am to measure learners' ability to comprehend written texts before the treatment phase. The evaluation comprised 25 multiple-choice items pertaining to recount text, encompassing reading comprehension, with an allocated response time of 45 minutes. Identical test materials were distributed equally to the trial and non-treatment groups.

After the intervention, the average post-test results for the Busuu group reached 85.9 ($n = 32$, $SD = 6.88$), whereas the control class recorded 82.4. ($n = 31$, $SD = 7.87$). The Kolmogorov-Smirnov procedure confirmed data normality ($p = 0.532$, above the 0.05 cutoff), ensuring the distribution was acceptable for parametric testing. Equality of variances was also validated, with Levene's statistic at $p = 0.564$ and Bartlett's measure at $p = 0.532$, both within the acceptable range. With these preconditions satisfied, a parametric comparison was applied. The results of the independent samples t-test indicated no statistically significant difference between the two groups ($t = 1.91$, $df = 61$, $p = 0.061$), with an average gap of 3.55 points and a moderate effect magnitude (Cohen's $d = 0.481$). These findings suggest that integrating Busuu into reading lessons statistically significant learners' comprehension outcomes.

*Corresponding author
IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

Figure 1. Distribution of Reading Comprehension Skills Used in Test Items

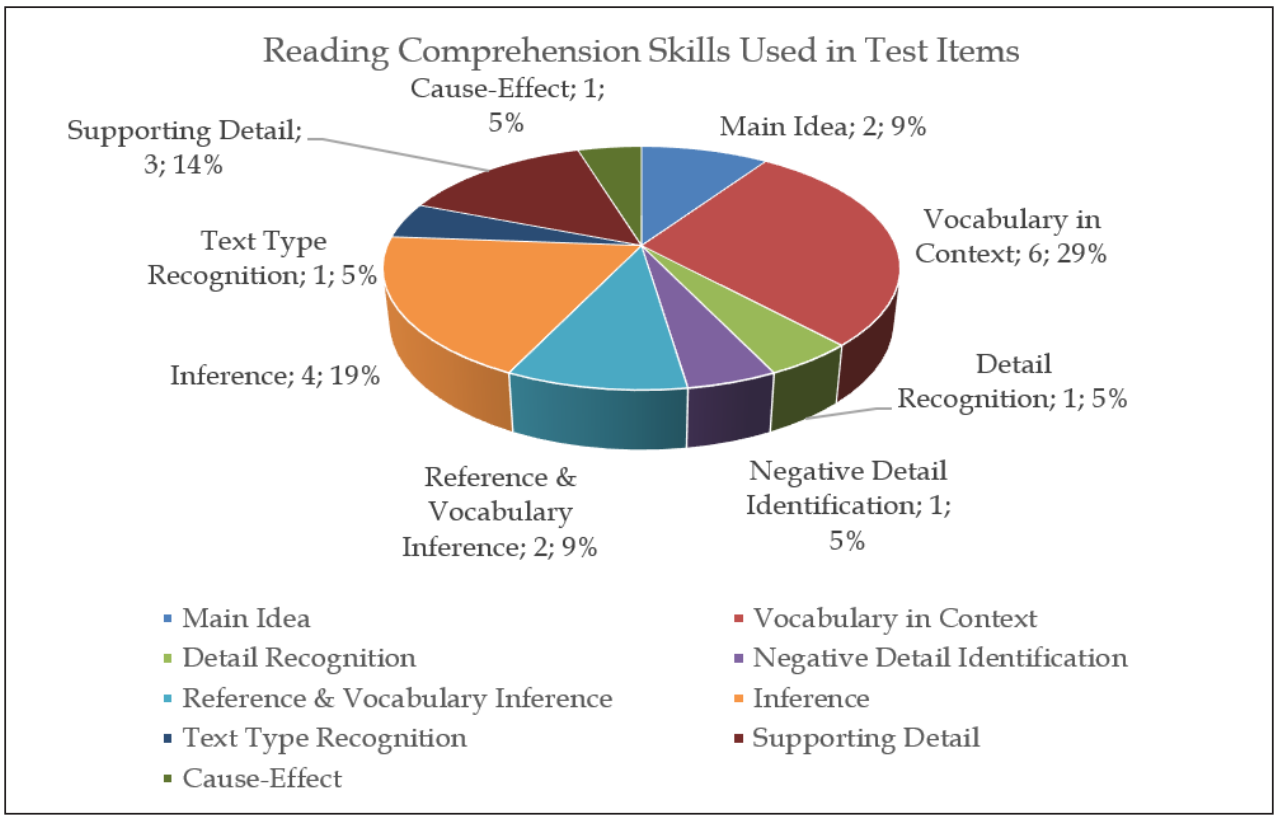

Table 5.4, seen in the appendix, shows that the control group (VIII-E) had an average pre-test score of 73.8, with scores ranging from 60 to 92. After the intervention, their post-test average rose slightly to 82.4. Since this group did not use the Busuu application, their results act as a reference point to assess the impact of the treatment class. The modest score increase reflects a typical learning progression through standard classroom instruction.

The experimental group in this study was class VIII-G at SMPN 1 Welahan, consisting of 32 students. Both initial and final test assessments were carried out to determine their reading comprehension. The baseline mean stood at 73.8, the same as in pre-test control group data, with individual scores ranging from 56 to 88. Once learners engaged with Busuu as a study platform, the post-test average rose to 87.06, with a score range of 72 to 96. The standard deviation increased from 6.58 to 6.88. The modest change in standard deviation indicates moderate between-student variability; most students improved, but the magnitude of gains varied across individuals. Most students scored above 80, with about 15% reaching the highest range (94–96). These results indicate a clear improvement in reading comprehension following the Busuu intervention, with the majority of students achieving higher proficiency levels at post-test. To statistically confirm these observed differences, ANCOVA was conducted. The results are presented as follows:

Table 2. ANCOVA Results (Post-Test with Pre-Test as Covariate)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	*p*	η^2	n^2p	ω^2
Overall model	2012	2	1005.9	44.69	< .001			
A	148	1	148.3	6.40	0.014	0.044	0.096	0.037
Pre-test	1864	1	1863.6	80.50	< .001	0.548	0.573	0.538
Residuals	1389	60	23.2					

*Corresponding author

P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

Table 2 ANCOVA Results (Post-Test with Pre-Test as Covariate) show that the overall model was statistically significant ($F = 44.69$, $p < .001$). The treatment factor (A) had a significant effect on post-test scores (**F** = 6.40, **p** = 0.014), with effect sizes $\eta^2 = 0.044$, $n^2p = 0.096$, and $\omega^2 = 0.037$. In addition, the pre-test scores strongly predicted the post-test outcomes ($F = 80.50$, $p < .001$), with large effect sizes ($\eta^2 = 0.548$, $n^2p = 0.573$, $\omega^2 = 0.538$). These findings indicate that the Busuu application contributed significantly to the improvement of students' reading comprehension, although initial ability (pre-test) remained the strongest predictor of final performance.

The statistical results confirm that the Busuu application significantly improved students' reading comprehension compared to conventional instruction. This outcome is consistent with previous findings on CALL and MALL approaches, which emphasize the role of interactive and contextualized tasks in enhancing comprehension (Stockwell, 2022; Syafrizal & Septiawati, 2022). This improvement aligns with theoretical perspectives, particularly Rumelhart's interactive model of reading, which highlights the integration of textual cues and background knowledge in constructing meaning. The structured activities in Busuu, such as synonym matching and comprehension questions, appear to reduce cognitive load and guide learners toward deeper engagement with texts. Moreover, the increase in post-test scores suggests that digital tools can foster learner motivation and autonomy, as students can practice independently while receiving immediate feedback. These findings extend earlier studies that focused on vocabulary and speaking skills, showing that Busuu also contributes to the development of reading comprehension in junior high school contexts.

Data are considered normally distributed when the resulting normality value exceeds the 0.05 significance level. Table 3 presents the paired samples t-test results comparing pre-test and post-test scores in the experimental group.

Table 3. Paired Samples T-Test

Test	Statistics	df	*p*	Mean Difference	SE Difference	Effect Size (*Cohen's d*)
Pre-test vs Post-test	-17.5	31.0	< .001	-12.2	0.698	-3.09

To determine whether the data met the assumption of normality, multiple tests were applied with a significance threshold of 0.05. The Shapiro–Wilk test yielded $p = 0.089$, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test produced $p = 0.125$, and the Anderson–Darling test reported p = 0.019. Since two of the three tests exceeded the 0.05 threshold, the null hypothesis (H_0) of normality was retained, indicating that the data distribution was sufficiently normal for parametric analysis. These results confirm that the assumption of normality is satisfied for both pre-test and post-test scores, thereby validating the use of parametric statistical methods such as independent sample t-tests to evaluate the impact of the intervention.

Table 4 Independent Samples T-Test (Post-Test Experimental vs Control)

Test	Statistics	df	*p*	Mean Difference	SE Difference	Effect Size (*Cohen's d*)
Post-test (Exp vs Ctrl)	1.91	61.0	0.061	3.55	1.86	0.481

An independent sample t-test was then implemented at Table 4 to examine whether a statistically meaningful variation existed in reading comprehension outcomes between learners in the experimental group (VIII-G), which utilized the Busuu application, and the control group (VIII-E), which followed conventional teaching methods. The independent t-test produced $t =$

*Corresponding author
IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

1.91, *df* = 61, *p* = 0.061, with a mean difference of 3.55 points and a moderate effect size (*Cohen's d* = 0.481). Since the p-value exceeded the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis was retained, indicating that no statistically significant difference was observed between the two groups post-test.

Although the difference was not statistically significant, the higher mean score in the experimental group suggests a positive trend favoring the Busuu intervention. These results imply that Busuu contributed to improved reading comprehension, but the effect did not achieve statistical significance in this comparison.

Discussion

This study provides strong evidence that the integration of the Busuu application into classroom instruction can meaningfully enhance students' reading comprehension. Although the between-group comparison did not reach conventional statistical significance, the consistent improvement observed in the experimental class underscores the educational value of mobile-assisted learning. The large within-group gains and the significant adjusted effect confirmed by ANCOVA highlight Busuu's independent contribution to comprehension development.

The findings directly address the research objective: to determine whether Busuu offers advantages beyond textbook-based instruction. Scientifically, the improvement can be explained by Busuu's interactive design, which combines vocabulary expansion, comprehension checks, sentence-ordering tasks, and short passages with follow-up activities. These features align with cognitive processes essential for reading and resonate with Interactive Reading Theory (Rumelhart, 1985; Yang, 2018), which emphasizes the integration of grammar, meaning, and context. In this way, Busuu does not merely supplement instruction but actively supports deeper textual understanding.

At the same time, the results are consistent with broader frameworks of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). Prior studies (e.g., AlDakhil & AlFadda, 2021; Sholikha & Malik, 2024; Syafrizal & Septiawati, 2022) have shown that interactive and mobile-based applications foster vocabulary growth and learner engagement. The present study extends this evidence by demonstrating that Busuu can also strengthen comprehension skills. The moderate between-group effect size, coupled with the large within-group improvement, suggests that Busuu's impact is most visible when learners engage with it consistently, thereby reinforcing the pedagogical potential of mobile-assisted tools.

Despite its contributions, the study has limitations. The short treatment duration, reliance on intact classes, and use of the free version of Busuu restrict generalizability. Moreover, the focus was limited to reading skills, leaving unexplored the application's potential for writing, speaking, and listening. Future research should adopt longitudinal designs, involve larger and more diverse samples, and investigate Busuu's broader influence across language domains.

Practically, the findings suggest that Busuu can be integrated into lesson plans to enrich instruction and foster learner autonomy. Teachers may incorporate Busuu modules into classroom activities or assign them for independent practice, while students benefit from immediate feedback and opportunities to build sustainable reading habits. In this way, Busuu functions not only as a supplementary tool but also as a catalyst for independent and engaged learning.

*Corresponding author

IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

This study confirms that the Busuu application can support the development of reading comprehension among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Welahan Jepara. Learners who engaged with Busuu demonstrated measurable improvement compared to those taught through traditional textbook-based instruction, indicating that mobile-assisted tools can contribute positively to language learning outcomes. In doing so, the research advances the field by extending evidence from mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) beyond vocabulary acquisition to the domain of reading comprehension, thereby broadening the scope of technology-enhanced pedagogy in EFL contexts.

While the findings suggest practical benefits for classroom practice, recommendations for widespread adoption should remain cautious until longer-term and larger-scale studies confirm the sustainability of these outcomes. The limited duration of the intervention, relatively small sample size, and focus on a single skill domain restrict the generalizability of the results. Future research should therefore expand across multiple schools, employ longitudinal designs, and include broader language domains such as writing, speaking, and listening, as well as motivational and metacognitive factors.

From a pedagogical perspective, Busuu's structured reading activities, vocabulary support, and interactive feedback provide a foundation for integrating mobile-assisted tools into diverse educational contexts. In sum, this study offers preliminary evidence that Busuu can enhance reading comprehension in the short term and contributes to the growing body of knowledge on MALL. It lays the groundwork for future innovations in EFL pedagogy, where mobile applications may serve not only as supplementary tools but also as integral components of language learning curricula.

REFERENCES

Abeeleh, T. W. A., Al-Ghazo, A., & Al-Sobh, M. (2021). Reading comprehension problems encountered by EFL students at Ajloun National University. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, *8*(1), 6–15. https://doi.org/10.30845/ijll.v8n1p2

AlDakhil, M., & AlFadda, H. (2021). EFL learners' perceptions regarding the use of Busuu application in language learning: Evaluating the technology acceptance model (TAM). *English Language Teaching*, *15*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n1p1

Catts, H. W. (2021). Rethinking how to promote reading comprehension. *American Educator*, 27–40. https://www.aft.org/ae/winter2021-2022/catts

Citrayasa, V. (2019). Junior high school students lived experiences of learning English using Busuu. *Indonesian EFL Journal*, *5*(2), 85. https://doi.org/10.25134/ieflj.v5i2.1900

Dhivya, D. S., Gurusamy, K., & Balamurali, E. (2024). Utilizing ELSA speak and busuu apps to enhance english for professional purposes among Indian students: An education 4.0 approach. *Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *7*(3), 1717. https://doi.org/10.29140/ajal.v7n3.1717

Diana, M., Syahrial, & Yunita, W. (2020). Students' Problems in Answering Reading Comprehension Question of Descriptive Text in The "Mandiri" Textbook Published by Erlangga at SMPN 1 Kepahiang. *Jadila: Journal of Development and Innovation in Language and Literature Education*, *1*(2), 161–174. https://doi.org/10.52690/jadila.v1i2.51

Dwi Agustina, S., & Laili Fatmawati, N. (2024). *Self-Directed Learning (SDL) trough Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in Learning Speaking Out-of-Class-The Use of Duolingo, Cake, Elsa Speak, Modly, and Busuu Applicatio*. *7*(2). https://doi.org/10.25078/yb.v7i2.2950

Fergina, A., & Oktavianda, M. (2024). *Factors influencing the completion of extensive reading tasks : A case study of Indonesian students in tertiary EFL class*. *12*(1), 126–146. https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v12i1.23111

Firdaus, M. A. (2023). *Busuu application in teaching speaking ability at Islamic school*. *1*(1), 90–104. https://doi.org/10.9644/scp.v1i1.332

Ghulam, M. T., Nurtaat, H. L., Lail, H., & Sujana, I. M. (2023). The Effectiveness of Using Webtoon

*Corresponding author

IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

Applications in Teaching Reading Comprehension at The Eighth Grade of SMP Negeri 11 Mataram. *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan*, *8*(2), 1043–1049. https://doi.org/10.29303/jipp.v8i2.1411

Hashemifardnia, A., Shafiee, S., Esfahani, F. R., & Sepehri, M. (2021). Effects of massive open online course (MOOC) on Iranian EFL learners' speaking complexity, accuracy, and fluency. *Computer Assisted Language Learning Electronic Journal*, *22*(1), 56–79.

Hassan, K., & Eltayb, A. (2021). Investigating Reading Comprehension Problems Encountered by Sudanese Secondary School Students: Teachers perspective. *International Journal Online of Humanities*, *7*(2), 11–25. https://doi.org/10.24113/ijohmn.v7i2.221

Hendratno, Istiq'faroh, N., Yasin, F. N., Wibowo, A. H., & Ghofur, A. (2025). Students' Comprehensions Ability on a Digital Storybook: a Quasi Experiment Research with Fry Readability Analysis. *International Journal of Language Education*, *9*(1), 114–131. https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v1i1.71710

Kamola Komilovna, K. (2023). Mastering Reading Comprehension: Avital skill for Academic Success. *International Scientific - Online Conference*, *2*(23), 83–89. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10020449

Katemba, C. V. (2025). Unlocking reading comprehension: A comparative study of individual vs. group annotation strategies. *Journal of English Language Pedagogy, Literature, and Culture*, *10*(1), 97–111. https://doi.org/10.35974/acuity.v10i1.3806

Kim, K. R. (2021). L2 reading difficulties faced by Malaysian students in a Korean university. *Journal of Digital Convergence*, *19*(2), 21–32. https://www.koreascience.or.kr/article/JAKO202110650791190.page

Majumdar, A., Shrivastava, A., Lee, S., Anderson, P., Parikh, D., & Batra, D. (2020). *Improving Vision-and-Language Navigation with Image-Text Pairs from the Web*. http://arxiv.org/abs/2004.14973

Monika, W., Wijesundara, C., Sudiar, N., & Latiar, H. (2025). *Assessing national reading habits through machine learning : Insights from the Indonesian reading interest rate survey (2020 – 2023)*. *10*(1), 35–52. https://doi.org/10.25299/itjrd.2025.24019

Mulyadi, A., & Maesaroh, M. (2021). The Effectiveness of Using "Busuu" in Teaching Speaking. *Jurnal Fakultas Keguruan & Ilmu Pendidikan*, *2*(3). https://www.neliti.com/publications/455708/the-effectiveness-of-using-busuu-in-teaching-speaking

Nabela Ramadea, Egar, N., & Yulianti, F. (2023). Bloom vs Barrett: Comparing reading comprehension types. *Language and Education Journal*, *8*(2), 128–145. https://doi.org/10.52237/lej.v8i2.486

Nasrullah, R., Laksono, K., Prayogi, A., Parmin, & Inayatillah, F. (2024). Establishing literacy foundations : Policies and interventions for Indonesia's future excellence. *Jurnal Kependidikan, 10*(3), 1219–1230. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33394/jk.v10i3.11011

Njiiri, J. (2022). *Contextual inference reading comprehension skill activities as determinants of reading comprehension performance Contextual inference reading comprehension skill activities as determinants of reading comprehension performance*. *1*(1). https://scholarship.claremont.edu/jlaea/vol1/iss1/8/

Nufus, Z., Mutiarani, & Sarwenda. (2023). The effect of rosetta stone application on student's English reading comprehension. \ *Journal of Education and Culture*, *1*. https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/3f01/0df7dfdeba6578dfbd9d700c2de90710f7bc.pdf

Putri, N. A., & Degeng, P. D. D. (2024). Utilizing mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) to alleviate speaking anxiety among EFL students. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, *12*(1), 125–136. https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v12i1.9352

Rahmawati, L., & Hidayat, H. (2024). *FLIP: Foreign Language Instruction Probe Learning English Listening Using Media Busuu Application*. https://jurnal.stit-buntetpesantren.ac.id/index.php/flip

Sholikha, A. I., & Malik, M. (2024). *the Effectiveness of Busuu Application Towards Students ' Vocabulary Mastery At Seventh Grades of Junior High School Faculty of Education and Teacher Training*. Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang.

Syafrizal, S., & Septiawati, T. (2022). Enhancing listening skills of EFL Indonesian learners through Busuu application. *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, *11*(3), 147–154. https://doi.org/10.55493/5019.v11i3.4615

Tuckman, B. W., & Harper, B. E. (2012). *Conducting educational research*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Wilson, P. T., & Fielding, L. G. (2007). Interestingness of children's reading material. In R. E. Snow & M. J. Farr (Ed.), *Aptitude, Learning, and Instruction* (1st ed., Vol. 3, pp. 287–299). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Interestingness of Children's Reading Material

Yang, Y. (2018). An English translation teaching model based on interactive reading theory. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, *13*(8), 146–158. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v13i08.9047

*Corresponding author

IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878

Zahran, F. A. (2025). The effect of utilizing nearpod with guided reading strategy on EFL primary pupils ' reading comprehension skills and motivation. *Journal of Education Research & Practice*, *15*(2024), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.5590/JERAP.2025.15.1976

Zainurrahman, Yusuf, F. N., & Sukyadi, D. (2024). Text readability: its impact on reading comprehension and reading time. *Journal of Education and Learning*, *18*(4), 1422–1432. https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v18i4.21724

*Corresponding author
IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education), 12 (2), 2025
P-ISSN: 2356-1777, E-ISSN: 2443-0390 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v12i2.48878